

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 4-15 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 7 and 8 are amended. Support for the amendment to claims 1, 7 and 8 can be found in the specification, for example, at Figures 2-6. No new matter is added. Reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 4-7 and 9-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Satoru et al. (JP 2001-297777, hereinafter "Satoru"); and rejects claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Satoru in view of Miyagawa (JP 2003-109618). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Satoru fails to teach any feature that can reasonably be considered to correspond to the "a film coating member that coats at least a peripheral edge portion and an inner circumference portion of the open portion of the separator substrate," as recited in independent claim 1, and as similarly recited in independent claim 8.

The Office Action, page 3, asserts that paragraph [0035] of Satoru discloses an insulation sheet 27 (37) that coats a predetermined area including an open portion of a separator substrate. Satoru merely discloses the insulation sheet 27 (37) being pasted to a metal plate 22, and the insulation sheet 27 (37) being located at a peripheral portion of the open portion 24, 25 and 26. *See* Satoru, paragraph [0035] and Figures 1-5. Satoru does not disclose the insulation sheet 27 (37) coating at least a peripheral edge portion and an inner circumference portion of the open portion of the separator substrate. Therefore, Satoru does not teach each and every feature recited in independent claims 1 and 8. Further, Miyagawa does not remedy the above-described deficiency in the application of Satoru to the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 8.

Applicant notes that because the film coating member coats both of a peripheral edge portion and an inner circumference portion of the open portion of the separator substrate, as

recited in independent claims 1 and 8, it is possible to improve the anticorrosive performance of the open portion of the separator substrate.

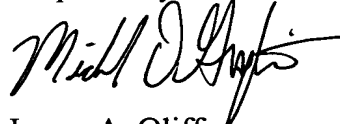
For at least these reasons, independent claims 1 and 8 are patentable over the applied references. Claims 2, 4-7 and 9-15 are also patentable over the applied references for at least their dependence on independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 2 and 4-15 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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